



2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Report



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LAHSA would also like to thank the thousands of volunteers, service providers, and County and City departments for their assistance and support conducting the 2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count.

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LAHSA is a Joint Powers Authority created and managed by the City and County of Los Angeles and is the lead agency for the Los Angeles Continuum of Care.



Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Highlights

The Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, the nation's largest count of homeless individuals and families, took place from Jan. 25-27, 2011 with the support of 4,000 volunteers. The census covered more than 4,000 square miles and included all of Los Angeles County, except the cities of Glendale, Pasadena and Long Beach, which conducted their own homeless counts.

2011



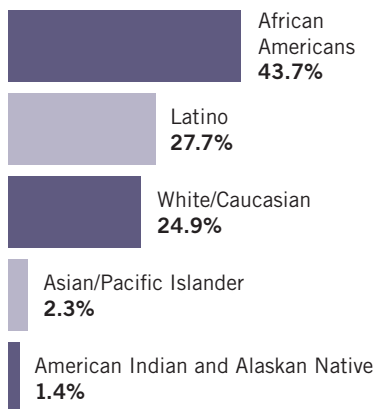
As the lead agency for the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (CoC), the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) coordinates the Homeless Count every two years as part of a national effort required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Homelessness in Los Angeles County

2011	51,340
2009	52,931

= **3%** decrease

Ethnicity of Homeless Population in LA County

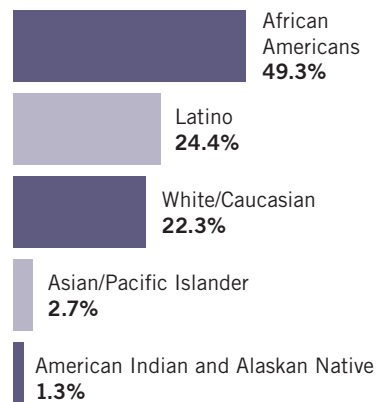


Homelessness in City of Los Angeles

2011	23,539
2009	25,771

= **9%** decrease

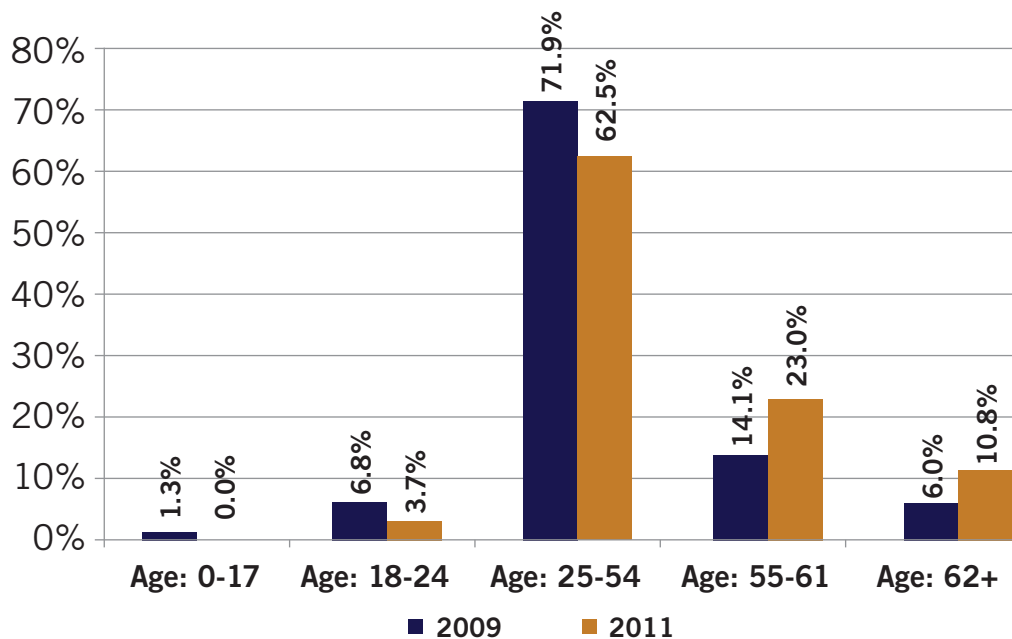
Ethnicity of Homeless Population in City of LA



A copy of the 2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Report can be obtained at www.lahsa.org. LAHSA will provide more detailed geographic information in the coming weeks.

Age of Chronic Homeless*

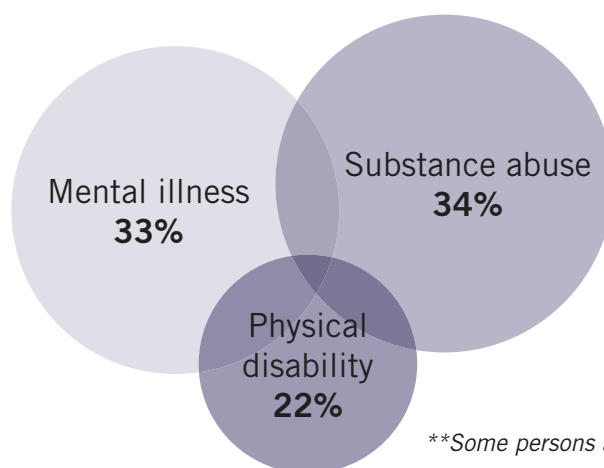
The homeless population is aging, with nearly 34 percent of chronic homeless persons aged 55 or older. This will increase the public cost of homelessness.



*Refer to definition of chronic homelessness in the 2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Report, page 13.

Disabilities**

Many homeless persons in Los Angeles County suffer from physical disabilities, mental illness and substance abuse. In particular, the homeless mental illness rate is higher than the national average.



**Some persons are experiencing multiple disabling factors.

Homeless Veterans

18 percent of the homeless are veterans – a 3 percent increase from 2009.

Veterans have a higher rate of chronic homelessness than the general population. 31 percent of homeless veterans are chronically homeless, up from 19 percent in 2009.

Male	5,939	7,221	+22%
Female	601	909	+51%
	2009	2011	Change

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Introduction

The Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count is the nation's largest count of homeless persons, covering over 4,000 square miles. The project is a community-wide effort made possible with the support of 4,000 volunteers including: homeless housing and service providers, nonprofits, businesses, faith based groups, government agencies and academic organizations throughout Los Angeles County. In addition to counting homeless persons living on the streets and in shelters, Los Angeles is one of the only jurisdictions to conduct a youth count in order to target hard to reach youth, a demographic survey, and a survey to identify homeless persons hidden from view because they were found on private property.

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) coordinates the biennial Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count for the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (LA CoC) as part of the national effort to enumerate the homeless population required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The LA CoC includes all of Los Angeles County, except the cities of Glendale, Pasadena, and Long Beach, who administer and operate their own respective Continuum of Care systems and conduct their own homeless counts.

Jurisdictions receiving federal funding to provide housing and services for the homeless through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grant Program are required to conduct a biennial Point-in-Time count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals and families during the last ten days of January. This information helps the federal government better understand the character and scale of homelessness nationally. Locally, the count provides valuable information to guide the allocation of limited resources for housing and services. It is also essential for future planning to prevent and end homelessness in Los Angeles.

Homelessness Definition

According to HUD, a person is considered homeless **only** when he/she resides in one of the places described below at the time of the count.

An unsheltered homeless person resides in:

- A place not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, or on the street.

A sheltered homeless person resides in:

- An emergency shelter.
- Transitional housing for homeless persons who originally came from the streets or emergency shelters.

Due to the size of Los Angeles, LAHSA divided the shelter and street components of the count into three geographic areas that were counted during a three day period from January 25 to January 27, 2011. The demographic survey was completed from February 2 to April 8, 2011 and included 3,658 surveys of homeless persons on the street and in shelters to gather key demographic information about the Los Angeles homeless population. A survey to identify the hidden homeless was conducted from January 25 to April 10, 2011. The survey estimated the number of homeless persons who were not counted during the street count because they were on private property and hidden from view. These persons were included in the unsheltered homeless count for the LA CoC.

This report summarizes our findings and the methodology used, with specific attention given to the following HUD priority target populations: veterans, the chronically homeless, families and youth.

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RESULTS OF THE 2011 GREATER LOS ANGELES HOMELESS COUNT

- In the **County of Los Angeles** in January 2011 there were an estimated **51,340** homeless persons, which represents a **3% decrease** from the prior count.
- In the **City of Los Angeles** in January 2011 there were an estimated **23,539** homeless persons, which represents a **9% decrease** from the prior count.
- The same methodology and components were used to calculate the 2009 and 2011 estimates.

Los Angeles County 2011 Homeless Count

Area	2011	Prior Count [*]	Change	%
Los Angeles Continuum of Care	45,422	47,572 ¹	-2,150	-4.5%
Glendale Continuum of Care	412	428	-16	-3.7%
Long Beach Continuum of Care	4,290	3,909	+381	9.7%
Pasadena Continuum of Care	1,216	1,137	+79	6.9%
Los Angeles County Total	51,340	53,046	-1,706	-3.2%

Los Angeles County 2011 Sheltered versus Unsheltered Count

	2011		Sheltered		Unsheltered	
Los Angeles Continuum of Care	45,422	88%	16,882	37%	28,540	63%
Glendale Continuum of Care	412	1%	291	71%	121	29%
Long Beach Continuum of Care	4,290	8%	2,087	49%	2,203	51%
Pasadena Continuum of Care	1,216	2%	453	37%	763	63%
Los Angeles County Total	51,340	100%	19,713	38%	31,627	62%

Los Angeles County 2011 Homeless by Household Type

	2011	Single Adults		Families		Unaccompanied Youth (<18)	
Los Angeles Continuum of Care	45,422	35,838	79%	9,218 ²	20%	366	1%
Glendale Continuum of Care	412	297	72%	115	28%	-	0%
Long Beach Continuum of Care	4,290	3,380	79%	910	21%	-	0%
Pasadena Continuum of Care	1,216	1,019	84%	194	16%	3	0%
Los Angeles County Total	51,340	40,534	79%	10,437³	20%	369	1%

^{*} Represents 2009 data for Los Angeles and Long Beach, and 2010 data for Glendale & Pasadena who conduct annual homeless counts.

¹ Adjusted for family members receiving Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) CalWORKs Temporary Assistance benefits. As a result of input from family providers who participated in a 2010 strategy session to improve techniques for counting homeless families, LAHSA was able to include 1,248 family households for 2011. These households comprised an estimated 3,744 family members. In 2009, there were 1,626 family households, with an estimated 4,878 family members. All families received a hotel/motel benefit through the Temporary Assistance program and were eligible for inclusion in the homeless count enumeration.

² The 9,218 family members in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care were in 3,035 families.

³ The 10,437 family members in Los Angeles County were in 3,439 families.

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Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

The Los Angeles Continuum of Care (LA CoC) includes all of Los Angeles County, except the cities of Glendale, Pasadena, and Long Beach, who administer and operate their own respective Continuum of Care systems and conduct their own homeless counts.

Table 1: Homeless by Household Type, 2009-2011

Area	2011	2009	Change	%	Single Adults	Family Members	Unaccompanied Youth (<18)
LA CoC	45,422	47,572*	-2,150	-4.5%	35,838 79%	9,218 20%	366 1%

Table 2: Sheltered and Unsheltered Data, by Household type, 2009-2011

Area	2011	Sheltered	Unsheltered	2009	Sheltered	Unsheltered
LACoC	45,422	16,882 37%	28,540 63%	47,572*	18,928 40%	28,644 60%
<i>by Household Type</i>						
Single Adults	35,838	9,541 27%	26,297 73%	37,171	9,834 26%	27,337 74%
Families	9,218	7,254 79%	1,964 21%	9,763	8,752 90%	1,011 10%
Unaccompanied Youth (<18)	366	87 24%	279 76%	638	342 54%	296 46%

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

* Adjusted for family members receiving DPSS CalWORKs Temporary Assistance benefits. As a result of input from family providers who participated in a 2010 strategy session to improve techniques for counting homeless families, LAHSA was able to include 1,248 family households for 2011. These households comprised an estimated 3,744 family members. In 2009, there were 1,626 family households, with an estimated 4,878 family members. All families received a hotel/motel benefit through the Temporary Assistance program and were eligible for inclusion in the homeless count enumeration.

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Table 3: Homeless Subpopulation Data

	2011	%	2009*	%
Chronically Homeless Individuals	10,901	24%	10,245	24%
Chronically Homeless Family Members	2,730	6%	not available	
Veterans	8,131	18%	6,540	15%
Survivors of Domestic Violence	4,610	10%	3,762	9%
Persons with AIDS/HIV	1,104	2%	1,064	2%
Persons with Mental Illness	14,830	33%	10,387	24%
Persons with Physical Disabilities	9,903	22%	not available	
Persons with Substance Abuse Problems	15,489	34%	17,419	41%

* based on 2009 original count of 42,694

Table 4: Homeless Gender Data, Adults and Children

	2011		2009*	
Adult Male	26,767	59%	25,862	60%
Adult Female	12,589	28%	13,730	32%
Male Children (< 18)	3,057	7%	2,026	5%
Female Children (< 18)	3,009	7%	1,076	3%

* based on 2009 original count of 42,694

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

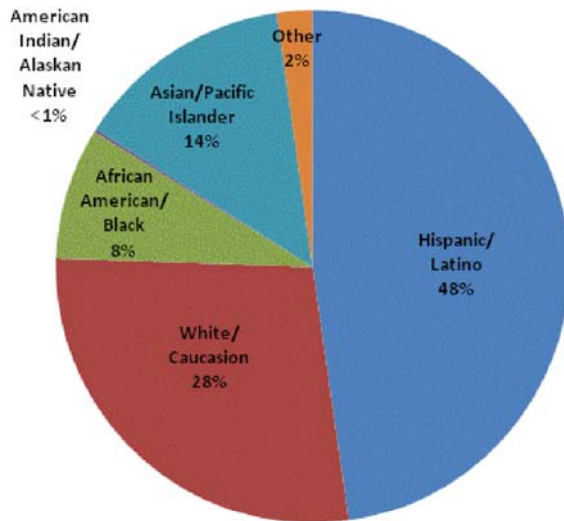
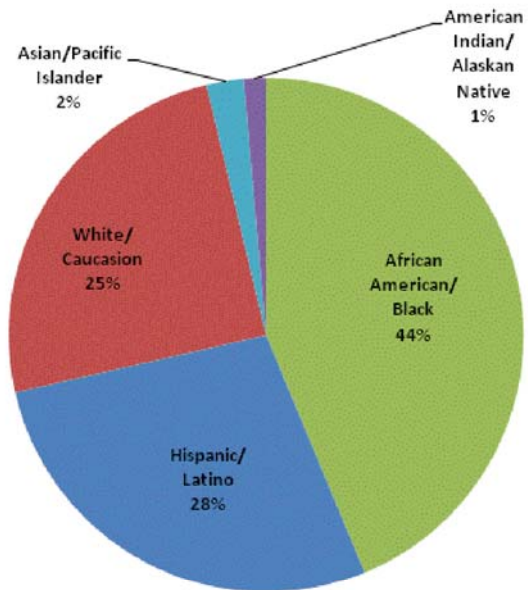
Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Table 5: Homeless Ethnicity Data, 2011

	2011	%	2009*	%
African American/ Black	19,868	43.7%	19,886	46.6%
Hispanic/Latino	12,573	27.7%	12,631	29.6%
White/ Caucasian	11,287	24.9%	8,924	20.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,058	2.3%	470	1.1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	636	1.4%	783	1.8%

* based on 2009 original count of 42,694

LA CoC: General Population**LA CoC: Homeless Population**

- African Americans/Blacks represent a disproportionately high share of our local homeless population.

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

LA CoC SUBPOPULATION DATA

Chronic Homeless

Chronic homelessness among single adults remained stable between 2009 and 2011.

- Nearly one-quarter (24%) of the homeless population were chronically homeless single adults. This rate is consistent with the 2009 data.
- The percentage of persons experiencing at least four episodes of homelessness in three years has increased, while the percentage of persons who have been homeless over one year has decreased.
- Of the chronically homeless survey respondents, there was an increase in mental illness and a decrease in substance abuse.
- Family members experiencing chronic homelessness comprise 8% of the total homeless population.

Chronic Homeless Definition

An unaccompanied disabled person who has been continuously homeless for over one year or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in three years; or a family is considered chronically homeless if at least one member meets the definition of chronic homelessness.

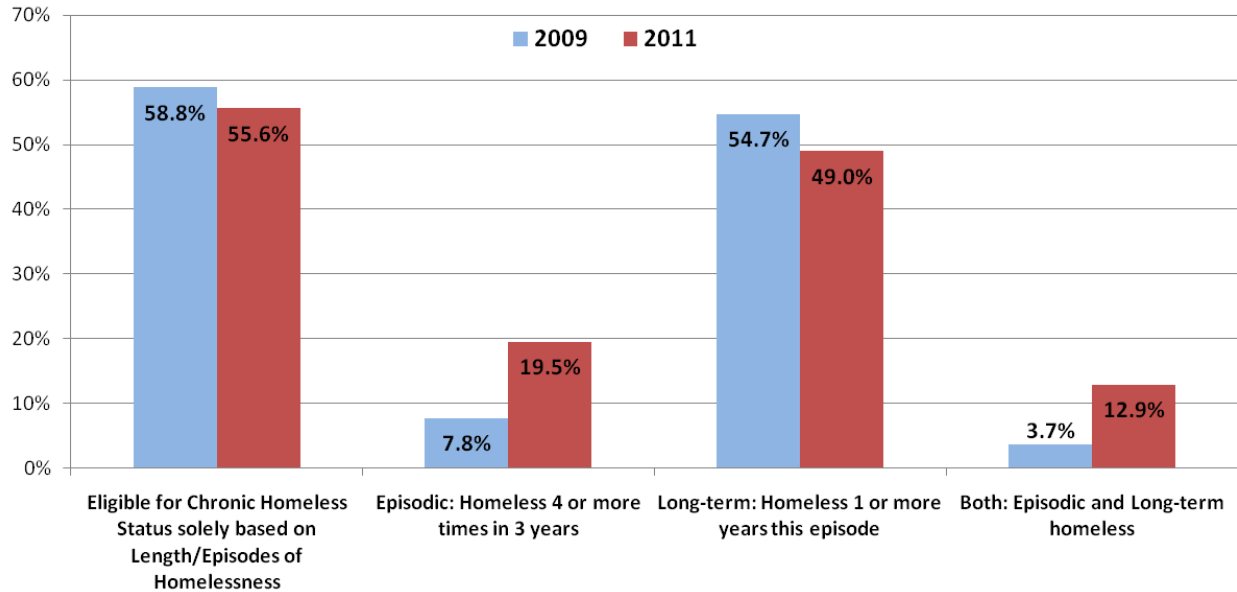
The stressors associated with a tough economy may exacerbate mental illness and increase the rate among already vulnerable homeless populations. More specifically, many individuals may lose their ability to pay for and maintain critical prescription interventions that stabilize the disabling condition of mental illness.

Additionally, the chronic homeless in the LA CoC is aging. Persons aged 55 and older now make up 33.8% of the chronic homeless population, compared to just 20.1% in 2009. The aging of the LA CoC's chronic homeless population will increase the public cost of homelessness; unless we address this emerging phenomenon, this trend will likely continue.

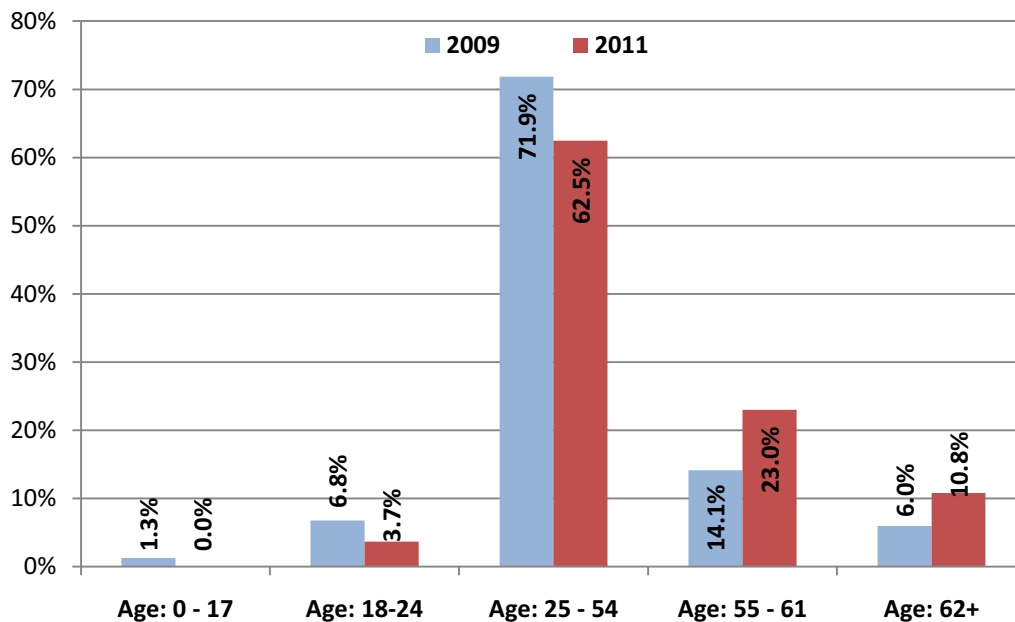
Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

LONG TERM AND EPISODIC CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS 2009-2011



AGE OF CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS 2009-2011



Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Veterans

- **18%** of the homeless in the LA CoC are Veterans, a 3% increase from the 2009 count.
- **31% of homeless veterans are chronically homeless** up from 19% in 2009.

Veteran Definition

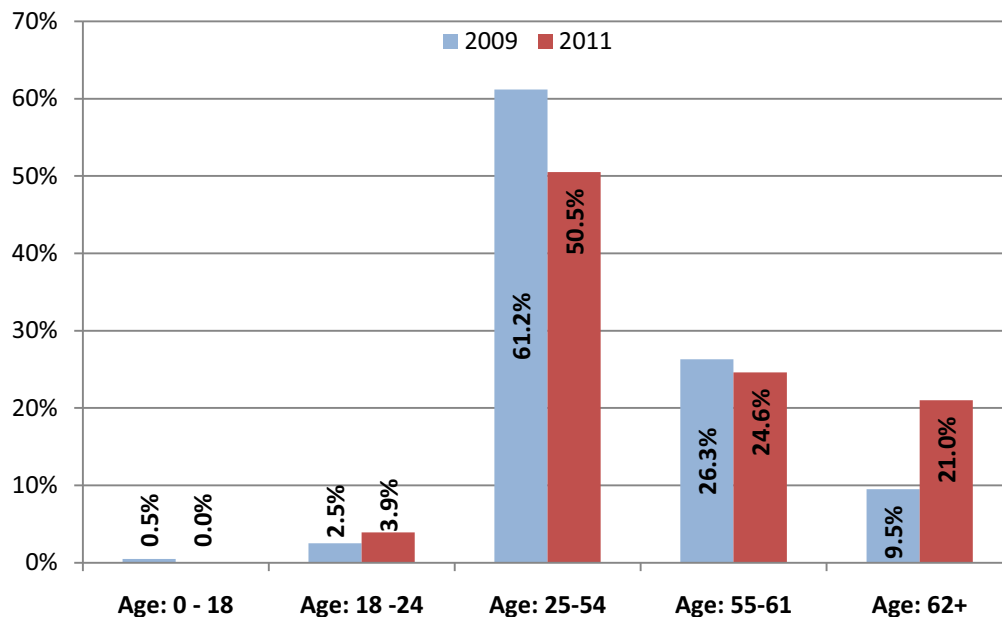
A person who has served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, not including inactive military reserves or the National Guard unless the person was activated into active duty.

- The female veteran homelessness increased 51% to 909, from 601 in 2009. Male veteran homelessness increased by 22% to 7,221 from 5,939 in 2009.

- Nationally veterans of the Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom or OIF) and Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom or OEF) wars are at significant risk of becoming homeless.

Source: Veteran Homelessness: A supplemental Report to the 2009 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress, Department of Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Administration, 2010

HOMELESS VETERANS: AGE 2009-2011



Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Families with children

In 2011, there were 9,218 homeless family members, 1,964 were unsheltered and 7,254 were sheltered.

Family Definition

A household with one or more adults accompanied by at least one child (under 18).

- There was a 6% decrease in family homelessness since 2009.⁵

Youth

In 2011, there were 3,788 homeless youth in the LA CoC, compared to 4,210 in 2009.

LAHSA conducted an unsheltered youth count separate from the unsheltered street count on January 31, 2011 during the day in order to include homeless youth who are not typically enumerated in night street counts.

- Local youth provider agencies and homeless youth volunteer counters found 859 homeless youth, ages 24 and under.
- Of the 3,788 homeless youth, 3,422 were between the ages of 18 to 24, and 366 were under 18 and unaccompanied.
- Provider agencies and homeless youth counters identified neighborhoods to count in each Service Planning Area (SPA) based on their knowledge of hot spot areas where homeless youth tend to frequent. In 2009, four of the eight Service Planning Areas (SPAs) in LA County were covered and in 2011, seven of the eight SPAs were covered.

Youth Definition

Unaccompanied persons, under 18 or between 18 to 24 years old.

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

⁵ Adjusted for family members receiving DPSS CalWORKs Temporary Assistance benefits. As a result of input from family providers who participated in a 2010 strategy session to improve techniques for counting homeless families, LAHSA was able to include 1,248 family households for 2011. These households comprised an estimated 3,744 family members. In 2009, there were 1,626 family households, with an estimated 4,878 family members. All families received a hotel/motel benefit through the Temporary Assistance program and were eligible for inclusion in the homeless count enumeration.

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Age

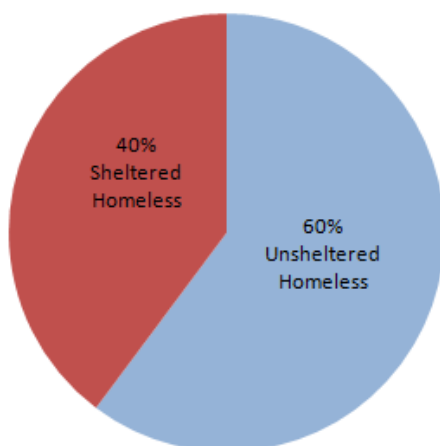
Table 6: Homeless Age Data, 2011

	2011	%
Under 18	6,066	13.4%
18-24	3,593	7.9%
25-54	26,085	57.4%
55-61	6,407	14.1%
62 & Older	3,271	7.2%

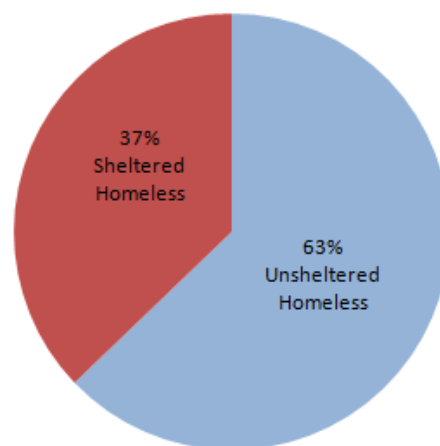
Unsheltered and Sheltered Homelessness

- Over the past two years, the unsheltered/sheltered rate has stabilized.
 - The unsheltered rate in the LA CoC is still unacceptable and poses major implications for the ongoing work that must be done to prevent and end homelessness. Contributing to our challenge is the lack of affordable housing and ongoing severe economic conditions.
- Of the LA CoC's homeless population, **28,540 or 63% were unsheltered** and 16,882 or 37% were sheltered.

2009



2011



Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Los Angeles Continuum of Care Results

Institution Count

In addition to counting homeless persons living in shelters and on the streets, LAHSA also conducts an enumeration of persons living in institutions such as local and county jails, hospital emergency rooms and beds, and residential alcohol and drug treatment programs who would be homeless if they were not residing in one of these programs.

- Although this data is not reported to HUD, it provides Los Angeles with valuable information about the homeless population which is used for planning purpose across the CoC.
- The 2011 count found 6,069 persons residing in institutions, which is a 1% decrease from the last time LAHSA conducted a similar count of institutions in 2007. This information was not collected in 2009 due to insufficient data.

Annualized Estimate

The total number of persons who were homeless during the course of the past year within the LA CoC was **120,070 persons**. The annualized number estimates the number of persons who become homeless during the twelve months that surround the count. The estimate also includes persons that cycle in and out of homelessness as well as those who become homeless for a period of time (such as a few weeks or a few months) that may not overlap with the nights the point-in-time homeless count was conducted. In 2009, the annualized estimate was 96,169.

City of Los Angeles Results

City of Los Angeles Results

- In the **City of Los Angeles** in January 2011 there were **23,539** homeless persons, which represents a **9% decrease** from the prior count.

Table 7: Homeless by Household Type, 2011

Area	2011	2009	Change	%	Single Adults	Family Members	Unaccompanied Youth (<18)
LA City	23,539	25,771 ⁶	-2,232	-8.7%	17,944 76%	5,284 22%	311 1%

Table 8: Homeless Sheltered and Unsheltered Data, by Household type, 2009-2011

Area	2011	Sheltered	Unsheltered	2009	Sheltered	Unsheltered
LA City	23,539	10,562 45%	12,977 55%	25,771	10,001 39%	15,770 61%
<i>by Household Type</i>						
Single Adults	17,944	6,175 34%	11,769 66%	21,653	6,501 30%	15,152 70%
Families	5,284	4,302 81%	982 19%	3,807	3,342 88%	465 12%
Unaccompanied Youth (<18)	311	85 27%	226 73%	311	158 51%	153 49%

Table 9: Homeless Subpopulation Data, 2009-2011

	2011	%	2009*	%
Chronically Homeless Individuals	5,579	24%	6,195	25%
Chronically Homeless Family Members	1,561	7%	Not available	
Veterans	3,267	14%	4,107	16%
Survivors of Domestic Violence	2,253	10%	2,206	9%
Persons with AIDS/HIV	793	3%	650	3%
Persons with Mental Illness	8,265	35%	6,056	24%
Persons with Physical Disabilities	5,049	21%	Not available	
Persons with Substance Abuse Problems	7,349	31%	10,554	42%

* based on 2009 original count of 24,915

City of Los Angeles Results

City of Los Angeles Results

⁶ Adjusted for family members receiving DPSS CalWORKs Temporary Assistance benefits. As a result of input from family providers who participated in a 2010 strategy session to improve techniques for counting homeless families, LAHSA was able to include 680 family households for 2011. These households comprised an estimated 2,040 family members. In 2009, there were 285 family households, with an estimated 865 family members. All families received a hotel/motel benefit through the Temporary Assistance program and were eligible for inclusion in the homeless count enumeration.

City of Los Angeles Results

City of Los Angeles Results

Table 10: Homeless Gender Data

	2011	%
Adult Male	13,585	57.7%
Adult Female	6,365	27.0%
Male Children (< 18)	1,809	7.7%
Female Children (< 18)	1,780	7.6%

Table 11: Homeless Ethnicity Data

	2011	%
African American/ Black	11,599	49.3%
Hispanic/Latino	5,747	24.4%
White/Caucasian	5,249	22.3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	631	2.7%
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	313	1.3%

City of Los Angeles Results

City of Los Angeles Results

Summary

The 2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Point-In-Time Count identified 45,422 homeless individuals and families, which represents a 4.5% decrease from 2009. Of the total homeless population, 16,882 or 37% were sheltered and 28,540 or 63% were unsheltered. There were 26,297 unsheltered single adults and 9,541 sheltered single adults.

As in 2009, nearly one-quarter of the homeless population (24%) are estimated to be chronically homeless single adults. For the first time ever, the 2011 count enumerated chronically homeless families, finding that 8% of the total homeless population consists of family members experiencing chronic homelessness.

The 2011 count identified 18% of the homeless as Veterans, which is a 3% increase from the 2009 Count. Veterans who were chronically homeless also increased from 19% in 2009 to 31% homeless in 2011.

In 2011, there were 3,788 homeless youth in the LA CoC, compared to 4,210 in 2009. 3,422 were between the ages of 18 to 24, and 366 were under 18 and unaccompanied. Of the 366, 279 were unsheltered unaccompanied youth under 18 and 87 were sheltered. Local youth provider agencies and homeless youth volunteer counters found 859 homeless youth, ages 24 and under in the unsheltered youth count on January 31, 2011.

Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program Succeeding

Through April 2010, LA City has used its funding to rapidly re-house 1,859 homeless persons and to prevent 1,140 persons from becoming homeless. LA County has rapidly re-housed and prevented homelessness for 2,618 persons over the same period.

Permanent Supportive Housing Making A Difference

LA County's \$100 Million Homeless Prevention Initiative, LA City's Permanent Supportive Housing Program, and the expanded Section 8 voucher program that specifically targets homeless individuals and families has **created 961 new permanent supportive housing** units since 2009.

Across the country, economic indicators for the past two years suggest that homelessness should be on the rise given the increases in national poverty, unemployment levels and continuing foreclosures, coupled with sharp reductions in social safety net and public benefits programs. Despite the tough economy, there was a slight decrease in homelessness in the LA CoC. It is important to acknowledge the role new and expanded programs implemented by the LA CoC network of housing and service providers played in preventing the number from increasing.

The Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) brought \$29,466,304 into the City of Los Angeles and \$12,197,108 into the County. This critical funding enabled eligible shelter clients to move to

permanency, while simultaneously creating shelter vacancies to be filled by other homeless persons living on the streets. Without this unprecedented funding, it is likely that homelessness would have increased even more in Los Angeles.

Additionally, the County's \$100 million Homeless Prevention Initiative, the City's Housing That Works Plan, and the expanded Section 8 voucher programs that specifically target homeless individuals and families has created 961 new permanent supportive housing since 2009. Additionally, the City has also dedicated a significant portion of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to homeless programs and services. Between 2008 and 2011, 1,650 Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers were awarded to Housing Authorities in the LA CoC. During this time period, over 1,039 Veterans moved into apartments using the VASH subsidy.

Homelessness in the City of Los Angeles has decreased by 9% since 2009, while areas outside of the City of Los Angeles have seen a no change in homelessness. This significant difference can be attributed to the resources the City of Los Angeles has dedicated to homelessness. The City of Los Angeles has contributed 745 project-based vouchers or operating subsidy amounting to almost \$75 million to the City's Permanent Supportive Housing. Currently almost 10% of the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles' Section 8 Voucher allocation, which amounts to over 4,000 voucher units, is set aside to house homeless individuals and families who are receiving case management and supportive services.

The techniques Los Angeles is employing to prevent and end homelessness are working as they have prevented a drastic increase in homelessness during the worst economic downturn in years. However, the slight decrease in the overall numbers from 2009 suggests that becoming homeless in a down economy may actually take longer to materialize. Many low income families and individuals are barely hanging on. They are precariously housed and as the federal, state, and local support systems disappear due to funding cuts, it is inevitable that more persons will become homeless. In order to ensure that homelessness does not substantially increase in the coming years, we must continue to support and expand the scale of successful programs and policies.

How you can help

To conduct the 2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count over 4,000 volunteers signed up and took part in the count. To continue our progress in preventing and ending homelessness we need you to stay involved. Volunteer your time and/or donate to the local programs in your community that are making an impact. You can stay informed and register for the next Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count at www.theycountwillyou.org.

Appendix

1. Street Count Methodology

Why was the Count Conducted?

Since 2003, HUD has required that every jurisdiction report the number of persons who are homeless in its Continuum of Care (CoC) geographic area. LAHSA has served as lead agency for the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (LA CoC) since the annual CoC grant submissions to HUD began in 1995. During this time, tens of millions of dollars have been received on behalf of approximately 200 public agencies and local private non-profit agencies to support homeless assistance and housing programs within the City and County of Los Angeles.

In 2004, HUD asked jurisdictions to describe the community's plans for a one day, point-in time count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless to be conducted during the last week of January 2005 and every two years afterward during the same period of time. In response to the HUD mandate, LAHSA designed and implemented a methodology that included sheltered and unsheltered persons in a continuum-wide count that is aligned with HUD recommended practices. The process included field enumerations, field surveys, telephone surveys, and a sophisticated statistical analysis used to project homelessness in the LA CoC. These practices are described below.

Who Conducted the Homeless Count?

LAHSA and the Survey Research Unit at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) collaborated in the design, implementation, and analysis of the 2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count. UNC's responsibilities were to provide methodology and process direction, to design and select all required samples, to develop estimation strategies, and to produce all project estimates. Additionally, UNC utilized their survey call center to conduct an extensive telephone survey to identify the hidden homeless. LAHSA's role included managing all other data collection tasks including: conducting the street and shelter counts, establishing the content of survey questions and forms, administering the demographic survey, compiling the estimates for presentation, and conducting the youth count (all as described below).

Who was Included in the Count?

Persons were considered homeless and included in the count if they fell within HUD's definition of homelessness:

"A person is considered homeless only when he/she resides in one of the three following places described below:

1. places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, and abandoned buildings;
2. an emergency shelter; or
3. transitional housing for homeless persons and who originally came from the streets or emergency shelter."

Who was not included in the Count?

HUD has instructed CoC systems not to include persons who are precariously housed in their homeless counts. These are persons on the edge of becoming literally homeless who may be doubled up with friends and relatives or paying extremely high proportions of their resources for rent.

How was the Count Conducted?

The 2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count used HUD recommended practices for counting sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons. Taking these recommendations into account, LAHSA completed a street count of unsheltered homeless persons and a shelter count of sheltered homeless persons. To further capture the unsheltered population in the LA CoC, LAHSA completed a telephone survey to identify the homeless hidden on private property and a street count specifically designed to capture homeless youth.

Street Count of Unsheltered Homeless Persons

Two-to-three person teams of volunteers were created to conduct street counts throughout Los Angeles County. Team members were trained on the night of the count on how to do a visual enumeration of homeless persons and were given maps with instructions that outlined the census tract assigned to them. Enumerators were given strict instructions to count only within the boundaries of selected tracts. Additionally, street count teams were provided census tally sheets, referral cards, key contact phone numbers, homeless count apparel, and other supplies.

Over the three-night count period, a random sample of 614 census tracts and an additional 308 Opt-In (see page 22 for a description of the Opt-In Program) census tracts were enumerated, for a total of 922 tracts. That represents 49% of the 1,887 total census tracts that fall within the LA CoC. This is a 22% increase from the number of census tracts counted in 2009.

Random selection was utilized at every step in choosing the sample census tracts used in enumerating the homeless as part of the street count. Random selection guaranteed that a broad representation of the homeless population in the LA CoC were included. This prevented the biasing of data that occurs when only counting areas where there are a large number of homeless persons or only interviewing in popular homeless areas such as hot spots. Hot spot census tracts are areas within the LA CoC in where there were significant concentrations of homeless persons. Such census tracts were identified in the 2009 homeless count and updated for use in 2011.

More than 20 homeless street outreach teams across Los Angeles County joined LAHSA staff on August 1, 2010 to help update the 2009 hot spot areas. As part of the study design, census tracts that were considered hot spot census tracts were over sampled, and had a greater likelihood of being selected as part of the randomized census tract selection process.

Stratification was used to ensure a more accurate count for smaller geographic regions within the LA CoC. The sampling frame was subdivided into important subsets called “strata.” For the purposes of this count, sampling strata were defined by the eight Service Planning Areas (SPAs) that make up Los Angeles County, by hot spot designation, and by several cities that requested full enumeration (i.e.,

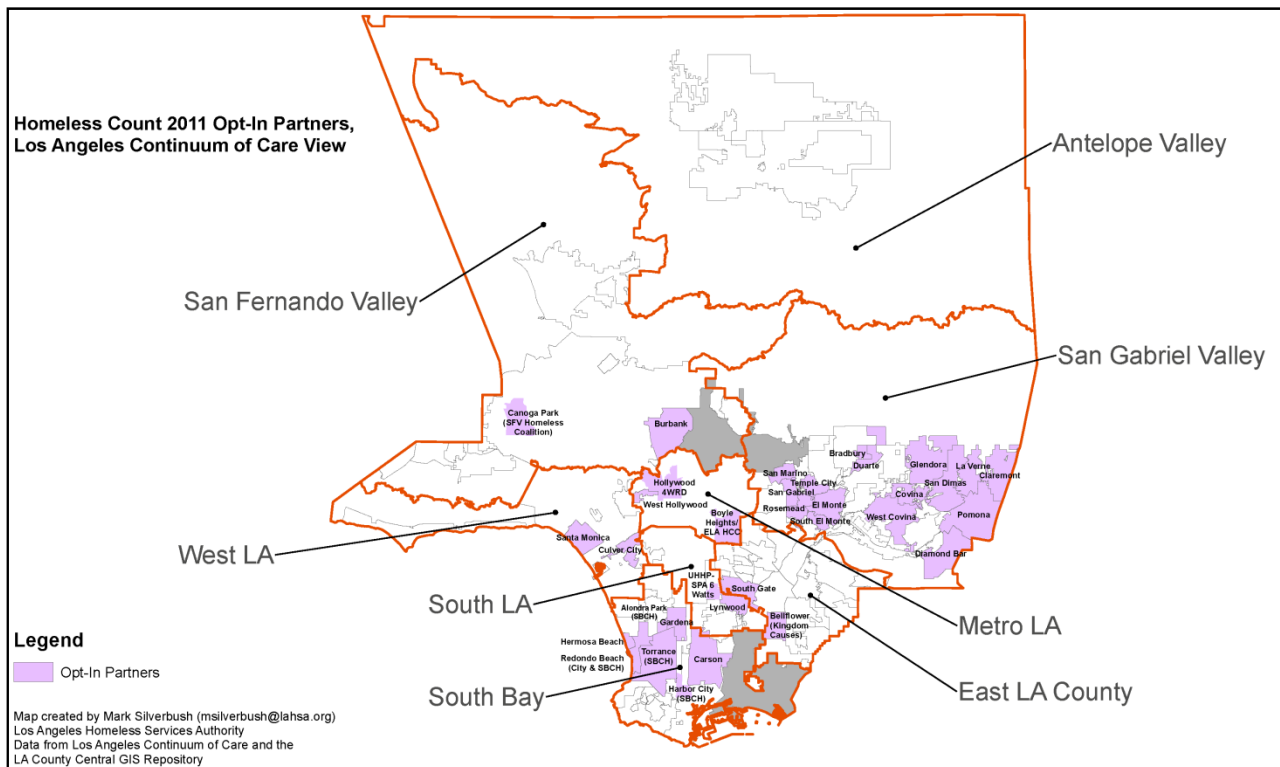
opt-in cities). A separate sample of census tracts was selected in each stratum to produce the best possible estimated street homeless count for the LA CoC.

The Opt-In Program

The Opt-In Program provides local jurisdictions with homeless count numbers specific to their area or city allowing them to obtain local homeless count information to more effectively address local homelessness and to report progress to federal, state, and county agencies to meet funding requirements. Prior to the 2009 homeless count, the methodology did not support this need. Beginning in 2009, the study methodology was enhanced to enable opt-in cities/communities to coordinate a homeless count within their borders using locally recruited volunteers from public and private agencies. In total, 34 areas consisting of 27 cities and seven communities enumerated all of their census tracts – through LAHSA's partnership with 25 city governments and five community groups, a 113% increase in Opt-In Area participation over 2009. Using the results from the LAHSA shelter and youth counts, cities are able to estimate a point-in-time number of the homeless families and individuals who are sheltered and unsheltered in their jurisdictions.

For information on individual city/organization results contact LAHSA at (213) 683-3333.

Map 1: City and Community Partners in the 2011 Opt-In Program



Opt-In City Partners

City	SPA	City	SPA
City of Bradbury	3	City of Lynwood	6
City of Burbank	2	City of Pomona	3
City of Carson	8	City of Redondo Beach	8
City of Claremont	3	City of Rosemead	3
City of Covina	3	City of San Dimas	3
City of Culver City	5	City of San Gabriel	3
City of Diamond Bar	3	City of San Marino	3
City of Duarte	3	City of Santa Monica	5
City of El Monte	3	City of South El Monte	3
City of Gardena	8	City of South Gate	7
City of Glendora	3	City of Temple City	3
City of Hermosa Beach	8	City of West Hollywood	4
City of La Verne	3		

Opt-In Community Group Partners

Organizing Group	Community/City	SPA
Boyle Heights - ELA	Boyle Heights/Placita Olvera	4
Hollywood 4WRD	Hollywood (City of LA)	4
Kingdom Causes	Bellflower	7
San Fernando Valley Homeless Coalition	Canoga Park (City of LA)	2
South Bay Coalition for the Homeless	Harbor City	8
South Bay Coalition for the Homeless	Alondra Park (Unincorporated)	8
South Bay Coalition for the Homeless	Torrance	8

2. Shelter Count Methodology

The 2010 Housing Inventory Chart of emergency shelters, transitional housing and safe havens from the November 2010 SuperNOFA application was used as a base for compiling a complete shelter list in the CoC. It was vetted with input from homeless coalitions, shelter providers, and LAHSA staff. Agencies with programs located in Service Planning Areas (SPAs) 3 and 7 performed their counts on the night of January 25th; SPAs 1, 5, and 8 were performed on January 26th and SPAs 2, 4, and 6 were performed on January 27, 2011, consistent with the nights of the street count. Quality checks comparing capacity to occupancy, HMIS data, zero count reports, prior count reports, and other measures were used to ensure response accuracy. In total, 368 programs were included for the point-in-time shelter census. The response rate was 100%.

3. Survey to Identify the Hidden Homeless Methodology

In an effort to locate unsheltered homeless persons hidden from view in Los Angeles County, UNC conducted a telephone survey of LA CoC residents. A random sample of LA CoC households (except for the cities of Long Beach, Glendale and Pasadena) were interviewed via telephone in order to estimate the number of homeless persons who were not counted during the street and shelter counts (excluding youths). Persons were classified as hidden homeless if they were sleeping on private property outside a place or residence, such as a car, van, carport, unconverted garage, camper, or encampment dwellings and were included in the unsheltered homeless count.

HUD worked with LAHSA to develop a definition of hidden homeless and determined that individuals or families who are precariously housed or at risk of literal homelessness should not be included in the unsheltered homeless estimate for the LA CoC.

HUD Definitions:

1. Precariously housed – A person who is staying with the household because he or she has no other regular or adequate place to stay due to a lack of money or other means of support and who is sleeping inside the house will be allowed to stay for 15-90 days.
2. At-risk of literal homelessness – A person who is staying with household because he or she has no other regular or adequate place to stay due to a lack of money or other means of support and who is sleeping inside the house, and will have to leave in 14 days or less.⁷

The telephone sample was identified from a disproportionately stratified split-frame (directory-listed and non-directory list-assisted Random Digital Dialing) sample of landline telephone numbers within the LA CoC. Stratification was by various characteristics thought to be predictive of hidden homelessness, with the general strategy being to oversample telephone numbers of households that were thought to be more likely to have hidden homeless persons present based on these predictors.

A total of 33,169 telephone numbers were placed in calling and 3,390 households responded to the hidden homeless interview. It was estimated that 10,800 persons were hidden homeless, living on private property not meant for human habitation. Calling took place over a three month period between January 25 and April 10, 2011. Each number was called a minimum of eight times over several weeks and at different times of the day (daytime, evenings, and weekends). The response rate was 34%.

In 2009, it was estimated that 9,968 persons were hidden homeless, living on private property not meant for human habitation. That year the response rate was 31%.

⁷ These definitions were agreed upon by experts from HUD, Urban Institute, and Abt Associates.

4. Homeless Youth Count

LAHSA conducted an unsheltered youth count separate from the unsheltered street count during the day hours of January 31, 2011 in order to include homeless youth who are not typically captured in night counts. A 2007 local field test confirmed that conducting an unsheltered youth count during the day would likely improve the LA CoC's ability to document youth homelessness with minimal risk of duplication.

Active leadership and commitment from local youth provider agencies and youth counters were critical to the success of the Youth Count. Under the supervision of provider and LAHSA staff, homeless youth volunteered to help organize and conduct the count. All youth counters and team supervisors were trained at the same time on the day of the count. Neighborhoods were pre-selected based on the youth counters' and providers' knowledge of hot spot areas that homeless youth tend to frequent. In most cases, teams were comprised of five youth counters and were assigned to team supervisors from the volunteer youth's sponsoring agency. Homeless youth were enumerated in areas where they typically reside or receive services under the supervision of homeless youth providers and LAHSA staff. Youth workers were told to use their best judgment in determining a person's homeless status and age.

Homeless youth volunteer counters were included in the count totals based on their sponsor organization's location, if the sponsor verified that they were not staying at their shelter during the count period. Unlike the unsheltered street count, no extrapolations were made from youth count data. The count data supplements the unsheltered count data.

5. Homeless Demographic Survey

Why was the Demographic Survey Conducted?

The survey was completed to estimate the size of various subpopulations of persons who are experiencing homelessness, including those that HUD incorporates into the "Point-in-Time Homeless Subpopulations" section of its annual CoC grant application. They include: (1) chronic homeless individuals, (2) chronic homeless families, (3) families (members of), (4) individuals (single), (5) persons with HIV/AIDS, (6) persons with substance abuse problems, (7) persons with severe mental illness, (8) veterans, and (9) survivors of domestic violence.

Who was Included in the Demographic Survey?

A sample of 3,585 adults participated in the homeless survey and provided detailed information about themselves and, when applicable, their children. This sample represents a 19% increase in completed survey interviews from 2009.

How was the Demographic Survey Conducted?

To obtain a representative sample of homeless persons, two samples were prepared—a street sample and a shelter sample. The street sample was randomly chosen among census tracts within the LA CoC which were included in the street count and thereby assured adequate representation by

SPA. Within each chosen census tract, field interviewers were assigned to complete randomly assigned zones. To reduce the opportunity for selection bias among the interviewers, every street, alley and park was canvassed for interviews to ensure the necessary number of completes, before teams could move on to the next census tract. In total, 2,735 interviews were successfully completed.

The shelter sample was randomly chosen among the shelters that participated in the January 2011 homeless count and included acceptable SPA-wide representation. To minimize selection bias, homeless persons were randomly chosen from the shelter rosters before interviewing took place. A total of 850 shelter interviews were completed.

All interviewers who participated in the street and shelter survey were trained by LAHSA staff, increasing accuracy and completion rates as well as enabling LAHSA to gather useful evaluation information from the interviewers such as refusals and explanations for non-responses.

When was the Demographic Survey Conducted?

The survey was conducted from February 7, 2011 through April 8, 2011.

Further Information

For further information and to obtain a copy of the 2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Report, visit lahsa.org or theycountwillyou.org.

LAHSA will provide more detailed geographic reports in the coming weeks.

Register to volunteer for the 2013 Count at theycountwillyou.org.

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